

U.S. Denies Pressure on Egypt; Rejects Espionage Accusation

By LLOYD GARRISON

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 23—The State Department brushed aside today President Gamal Abdel Nasser's charge that the United States had made "astonishing" demands on the Egyptian Government in return for aid.

At the same time, Washington denied accusations that Bruce Taylor Odell, a 36-year-old United States Embassy officer in Cairo, had been spying for the Central Intelligence Agency. The official Egyptian press agency said yesterday that Mr. Odell had been caught taking information from Mustafa Amin, a prominent Cairo editor.

In a speech last night marking the 13th anniversary of the Egyptian revolution, President Nasser made no mention of Mr. Odell. He said United States pressures had mounted steadily as Egypt accepted more and more shipments of American wheat.

Late in 1963, he said, Washington asked the United Arab Republic to agree not to produce nuclear weapons, to stop missile production, freeze the size of the army and allow American inspectors to insure that the agreements were being kept.

"I was astonished by these demands," the Egyptian leader told a cheering crowd. "Why not simply announce our country was an American colony?"

Marshall Wright, a State Department press officer, said the United States had at no time made any demands on the United Arab Republic. He added that, while American officials had discussed "the spiraling Middle East arms race" with Cairo, similar talks had been held with dozens of other governments in an effort to curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons, missiles and other armament.

President Nasser's accusation

and the subsequent denial considerably strained already tense United States-Egyptian relations. These began to deteriorate last fall with violent demonstrations against United policy in the Congo and the burning of the Kennedy Library in Cairo. Officials here were hopeful that the latest controversy would blow over without causing lasting damage.

Mr. Wright emphasized that no formal charges had been brought against Mr. Odell and that thus far no move had been made to expel him.

Mr. Odell was at Mr. Amin's Alexandria villa when the police arrested the publisher and journalist Wednesday afternoon.

Spy Charge Rejected

The Middle East press agency has charged Mr. Odell with being a spy for the C.I.A. It said he had received a "weekly" intelligence report from Mr. Amin, who was accused of being on the C.I.A.'s payroll.

The State Department categorically denied that Mr. Odell was an employee of the intelligence agency and said he was a Foreign Service reserve officer serving as an attaché in the Cairo embassy.

"No documents, no pieces of paper whatsoever were exchanged," Mr. Wright said.

Mr. Wright acknowledged that at the time of Mr. Amin's arrest Mr. Odell was carrying notes of previous conversations with other Egyptians.

These notes were found when the police searched him and are "presumably" in police hands, Mr. Wright said. He added that Mr. Odell was said to have been interrogated for "about an hour" at Mr. Amin's house and then released.

The State Department said both countries were looking into the case.

CPYRGHT